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MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

MARYLAND READING

NETWORK

200 W. Baltimore Street ◆ Baltimore MD 21201 ◆ Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

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What is the Maryland Reading Network?

The Maryland Reading Network is one of the activities of the Center for Reading Excellence, a collaboration with the Maryland State Department of Education, Johns Hopkins University and the Kennedy Krieger Institute. Together with local school systems in Maryland, the network is designed to disseminate and share research-based, best practices about reading for all audiences (classroom teachers, administrators, institutions of higher education and others) in the state. These educators are committed to developing and modeling effective reading programs for students in schools throughout the state.

Why was the Maryland Reading Network established?

The Maryland Reading Network was established to address a widespread concern about how to teach reading effectively. During the 1996-97 school year, a committee of classroom teachers and reading supervisors from local school systems, as well as representatives from institutions of higher education, met regularly for several months and decided that a network of professional educators from local school systems in Maryland should be formed. The purpose of the network is to extend understanding of how reading is learned and to provide models of effective reading programs.

Who are the participants?

Each local school system in Maryland is invited to select participants to form local network teams. There are school teams of early childhood/primary teacher, intermediate teachers, secondary teachers, and a higher education network. On the school teams, a staff development specialist in reading from the central office level, school level administrator and reading resource or other teachers from the same school comprise the local Maryland Reading Network team. In this way, both building level and system level reading is addressed.

What are the Maryland Reading Network's goals?

Each Maryland Reading Network team will create a plan to implement a balanced reading program at their school. Participating schools will become observation sites for exemplary reading instruction. School level administrators will provide training for all members of the school community (teachers, parents, other interested persons) regarding the reading program in the school. Central office representatives will provide system-wide staff development in reading and provide assistance and support in reading to teachers in participating schools. Teachers will work closely with other teachers to be sure the entire school has a comprehensive reading program. The other networks such as the Institutions of Higher Education Network will work to disseminate best practices with pre-service and experienced teachers.

How does it work?

A network among participating team members is developed during the year, through summer institutes, briefings, symposiums and other events. Experts in the field of reading are invited to make presentations on topics of need or interest and participants then make plans for incorporating information from the presentations in their own local schools. Meetings following the summer institute address issues and help to solve problems the participants might encounter as they work to bring a balanced reading program to the school. In addition, participants work with educators from other local school systems to share ideas and strategies which have been effective in their own schools.

How can I learn more about the Maryland Reading Network?

To learn more about the Maryland Reading Network and other reading initiatives, contact Specialist in Reading and Communication Skills, Maryland State Department of Education, 410-767-0721, or the Center for Reading Excellence, Johns Hopkins University, 410-261-3630.

For more information, call 410-767-0600 (Baltimore area) or 1-888-246-0016 (toll free) or visit our website at www.msde.state.md.us

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